

The Life of Moses:
Our Cheating Hearts
Exodus 32

Two weeks ago in our *Life of Moses* sermon series (Exodus 24), we saw the nation of Israel and the God of all creation pledging themselves to one another at Mount Sinai! As Skin pointed out, it was an amazing “**wedding ceremony/reception**”—easily one of the high points of the Old Testament!

At the end of Exodus 24, God summons Moses to the top of Mount Sinai. For the next six weeks (and seven chapters), He spells out what this new “marriage” will look like—how the people of God will serve and worship the God who pursued and rescued and called them to Himself.

What happens next is one the low points of the Bible (and a warning to us!)

Israel’s **Idolatry** (Exodus 32:1-6)

THE LESSON: Our great sin is _____.

Moses’ **Intervention** (Exodus 32:7-35)

He faithfully _____ for them (11-14).

He boldly _____ them (15-29).

He selflessly offers _____ (30-35).

THE LESSON: We have _____.

Identifying some of the **idols** in our lives...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Life only has meaning IF... • “I only have worth IF... • “My efforts & hopes are focused on trying to see THAT... • “I get angry (or feel depressed) UNLESS... 	This is the idol of...	The great nightmare is...
...I have power & influence over others.”	Power	Humiliation
...I am loved & affirmed by _____.”	Approval	Rejection, condemnation
...I have this kind of pleasure experience, or a certain quality of life.”	Comfort	Stress or demands
...I am able to get mastery over my life in the area of _____.”	Control	Uncertainty or chaos or mess
...people are dependent on me and need me.”	Helping	Not being needed
...someone is there to protect me and keep me safe.”	Dependence	Being alone
...I am completely free from obligations or responsibilities to take care of someone.”	Independence	Commitment
...I am highly productive and getting a lot done.”	Work	Unproductiveness
...I am recognized for my accomplishments, and am excelling in my work.”	Achievement	Failure
...I have a certain level of wealth, financial freedom, and very nice possessions.”	Materialism	Poverty or loss
...I perform flawlessly.”	Perfection	Making a mistake
...this one person is in my life and happy to be there.”	A Person	Unrequited love
...others admire me, view me as exemplary; regard me as ‘having it together’.”	Image	People realizing I <i>don’t</i> have it all together
...my race and/or culture is ascendant and regarded as superior.”	Race/culture	Racial equality
...a particular social or professional grouping or other club lets me in.”	Inclusion	Exclusion
...my children and/or my parents are happy and happy with me.”	Family	Breakdown of family; seeing the ideal shattered
...I find & marry or Mr. or Ms. ‘Right’	Marriage	Being single
...I am hurting, in a problem (only then do I feel worthy of love or able to deal with guilt).”	Suffering	Being well/okay; not being able to play the victim
...my political agenda or social cause is making progress or ascending in influence or power.”	Ideology	Irrelevance
...I have a particular kind of look or body image.”	Beauty	Physical imperfection; aging

Adapted from Timothy Keller’s *The Gospel in Life*

Some truths to remember:

- Idols are often *good* things (e.g., marriage, children, a job, etc.) that we turn into *ultimate* things (i.e., we deify them).
- An idol is anything we look to (other than God) to rescue us or give us meaning, identity, significance, or happiness.
- Whatever we live for will end up having power over us. Idols inevitably become our masters. Ironically, in not wanting to give ourselves to the Lord, we give lesser ‘gods’ the power to control and curse us.
- We can experience freedom from our idolatries when we identify & name our false gods, recognize their inability to save us, repent of our misplaced trust and love, and trust in the truth of the gospel—that only Jesus is Savior and King, and that only He can deliver us and give us what our souls most deeply need.